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Students, Faculty Celebrate Black History Month

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – February is Black History Month, and Cedarville University has already begun offering many opportunities to celebrate it. Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time to recognize the central role of African-Americans in U.S. history.

One opportunity on campus is a “Listen, Lunch and Learn.” Join one of five lunchtime table discussions led by various members of the faculty and staff from an African-American perspective. The discussions will be offered February 3, 10, 13, 24 and March 13 in the Stevens Student Center (SSC) dining room from 12-1 p.m.

“Most Christians want to talk about race/ethnicity, but are uncomfortable because it can be a complicated conversation to start,” said Greg Dyson, director of intercultural leadership and organizer of the university’s events commemorating Black History Month. “The speakers will provide students and staff advice on how to enter into these tender conversations.”

Some of the speakers will be Caroline Barnett, assistant professor of nursing; Kenneth Rucker, associate director of career services; Patrick Oliver, director of the criminal justice program; and Dyson.

A second opportunity is “Talk, Munch and Movie” on February 7 and 28. Current minority students will call future minority students and answer questions about Cedarville University and encourage them to visit. After making calls, current students will be treated to pizza and a movie night, watching “Separate But Equal” (Feb. 7) or “Remember the Titans” (Feb. 28). There are several current students on campus as a result of last year’s calling efforts, Dyson shared.

Another opportunity is faculty/staff prayer and praise time on February 13 and March 1 in the lower level of the SSC from 1-1:30 p.m.

“For the last three years, Cedarville has scheduled unique prayer opportunities for faculty and staff to come together and focus on certain things that are happening around the country,” said Dyson. “For the month of February, we want to direct our prayers toward multicultural concerns.”

Dyson also encourages people to visit multicultural and African-American churches, such as St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Springfield; Cornerstone Baptist Church in Wilmington; All Nations Bible Fellowship in Dayton; and First Baptist Church in London, where Dyson serves as pastor.

“Theology is one of the biggest divides I see between races,” said Dyson, “which is why I want to encourage people to visit a church that’s more multicultural so we can close that gap and address theological concerns together.”

Dyson also advised visiting the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce. Several dozen students and classes have already taken the opportunity to do so, and Dyson will help coordinate an individual or group visit.

Dyson hopes that through these opportunities, questions will be answered and unity will be developed.

"I'm thankful that [Cedarville president] Dr. [Thomas] White gives me the freedom to explore racial nuances so we can be made more like the body of Christ," said Dyson.

For more information about these opportunities visit <http://blogs.cedarville.edu/interculturalupdate/2017/731/> or email Greg Dyson at gdyson@cedarville.edu.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.